

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3211

February 6th, 2019

Mayor Bill de Blasio
City Hall Park
New York, NY 10007

Mr. Mayor,

We write to you today regarding our concerns over your recently announced plans to ensure every New Yorker has access to health insurance through strengthening MetroPlus and the new NYC Care program. Based on the details announced so far, and conversations we have had with your agencies, the citizens and health care providers of Staten Island will be left out and will receive no increased funding under your plan.

The plan as described by public media reports and conversations with your health care officials indicate that these initiatives will only be implemented through NYC Health and Hospital (H+H) facilities. As you are aware, Staten Island has no H+H acute care hospitals. Our borough of nearly 500,000 New Yorkers is served primarily by two hospitals, both of which are non-profits and are just as deserving to access the benefits of these initiatives as H+H facilities. While we are grateful that H+H recently opened the new Gotham Health community health center on the North Shore of Staten Island, it does not address the fact that our non-profit hospitals still serve a large number of uninsured patients and that they are in need of increased funds from the city to ensure their fiscal integrity.

We are also concerned that for a Staten Islander to receive care under these initiatives, they will only have access to one Staten Island H+H community health center that provides limited services, or they must travel off the borough. For those in need of inpatient hospital care, they may be forced to travel long distances out of the borough to access care covered under the upgraded MetroPlus plan. We do not believe it is in the spirit of your plan to force our most vulnerable residents to travel hours outside of their neighborhood to receive needed care. This is not accessible health care for the people of Staten Island.

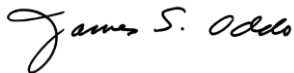
In addition, our hospitals spend tens of millions of dollars for bad debt and charity care for patients who cannot afford the full cost of care. The fact that they will be forced to continue to do so, while H+H spends over \$7.5 billion annually to provide care to New York City's most vulnerable citizens strikes us as not only patently unfair but puts an unequitable burden on our hospitals that is shared with H+H in the City's other four boroughs.

We are requesting an immediate meeting to be held between the individuals overseeing these initiatives, our offices, and the leadership of Richmond University Medical Center and Staten Island University Hospital so that we can develop a plan that ensures Staten Island's citizens can access the benefits of these initiatives through Staten Island's health care providers, and are not denied health care access by virtue of their ZIP code.

Sincerely,



Max Rose
Member of Congress



James Oddo
Borough President



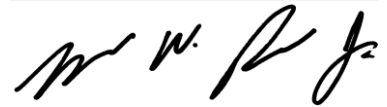
Diane Savino
State Senator



Michael Cusick
Assembly Member



Nicole Malliotakis
Assembly Member



Michael Reilley
Assembly Member



Debi Rose
City Council Member



Joseph Borelli
City Council Member